

**State of Oklahoma**  
**House of Representatives**  
**March 11- March 18, 2011**  
**Representative Jeannie McDaniel**  
**Weekly Wrap #6**

Members of the House wrapped up work on House Legislation this week and now look to hearing Senate bills! **It was six weeks of surprises**, some successes and lively discussion regarding how we address challenges from education, pension systems and taxes. Thank you for your interest and questions over the first six weeks. Your emails and comments are very helpful. Moreover, your visits are greatly appreciated! Listening to your concerns firsthand bring us into your classrooms and/or through the front door of your business.

**March Madness** is truly the best term to describe the past week. Over the years I've come to understand that floor debate rarely changes a member's vote but we use these opportunities to voice our perspective and lobby for understanding and respect for diversity. With 101 members, the House floor is seldom silent.

Each session when I'm reminded that "legislative bills" are like railroad cars traveling from Los Angeles to New York City. (**The train is in Oklahoma right now.**) These cars start out with cargo and on the cross-country trip they may have additional items added to the shipment (amendments, added language) or the car may be emptied and a whole new load replaces the original contents (removing title and replacing all the language, and often the entire intent), or sometimes it's as simple as just taking the car off the tracks and set on a side spur to wait temporarily for further orders (removing the title from a bill – handicaps it until further changes). These are the processes we navigate when we vote for bills.

Each morning when we take our seats we must pay close attention to amendments. Friendly amendments usually mean the bill's author believes this amendment will make his bill better. Unfriendly amendments mean the bill's author doesn't want his bill to host the suggested language. (House members vote to decide if an amendment is added or not added.) One of the most challenging issues for members is when they have read a bill (1-200+ pages) and are prepared to vote on it, and then the entire content is changed depending upon whether a proposed amendment is adopted or tabled. (HB2128, Steele- Caps on noneconomic damages.) This is also very difficult for those of you who try to follow our votes or listen each day. If you are in doubt about the language – call us. Remember, for a bill to reach the House floor it has already gone through a committee process, so when it is filled with all new language (floor substitute) when it comes up for a vote, it can be very tricky to understand the author's intent.

Remember – now the House bills go to the Senate for processing through committees and approved Senate bills move to the House committee pipeline. Nothing has been sent to the Governor with perhaps one bill that will enable the Department of Corrections to manage funds to offset furloughs. The bills you hear about are not in law until they go through both the Senate and House and then to the Governor. The House floor calendar will be small for the next week but committee work is well underway again. So stay in touch and keep up the email.

Next week I will forward a detailed list of bills that were passed on to the Senate. Bill tracking can be done online at: <http://www.okhouse.gov/Legislation/Default.aspx>

To stay tuned in: <http://www.okhouse.gov/Video/Default.aspx>

### ***House Redistricting***

**Working with the House Redistricting Office we continue to develop regional plans.**

**Redistricting** is one of the most important issues we will accomplish before we end session in May and entails moving district boundaries to reflect population changes from the 2010 Census. All of the House members are carefully working together to create districts that are consistent with many other political areas such as council districts, county commission districts, etc. Our district (House District 78) has lost population since the 2000 Census and we need to add approximately 5,000 people to District 78 – therefore the district will take in more precincts. <http://www.okhouse.gov/Research/Redistricting.aspx>

You understand that our goal is to support legislation that will help make Oklahoma a great place to live. We prioritize and balance the intent of bills each day to measure the value it can bring to build our state's economy and provide a strong foundation for the future.

House Speaker Kris Steele reminds us, "It is an enormous responsibility knowing each vote cast could change the lives of Oklahomans. Our focus is on doing what's best for our citizens and the future of our state."

You can use the House website at <http://www.okhouse.gov/> to keep track of bills as they move through the legislative process. Or, if you have special concerns – please email our office at [jeaniemcdaniel@okhouse.gov](mailto:jeaniemcdaniel@okhouse.gov) to get answers. Use (800) 522-8502 to contact us!

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